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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 KATHMANDU 001356

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SUBJECT: NEPAL: MAOIST WARNING AGAINST US-AFFILIATED
PROGRAMS

Classified By: Ambassador Michael E. Malinowski for Reasons 1.5 (b,d).

1. (C) Summary. The Maoists in Nepal reportedly have issued a notice that all Nepali nationals affiliated with the United States in Maoist-controlled areas would be subject to harassment and travel restrictions. Reports from many west and mid-west districts have indicated that the Maoists' edict has been widely disseminated, and anecdotal evidence suggests that the Maoists have increased travel restrictions on Nepali aid workers. In the western District of Kalikot, a foreign development worker was detained by the Maoists for questioning, but later released. U.S.-affiliated organizations operating in affected areas have not reported a change in treatment by the Maoists. Despite the Maoist edict, ongoing development programs in remote areas may not encounter difficulty with the Maoists due to already established relationships with local Maoist leaders. End Summary.

2. (C) On July 15, Post received a letter from the Royal Nepal Army's Department of Military Intelligence indicating that Maoists had issued "a notice stating that all personnel who are working for or in any way related with the United States of America are to undergo public prosecution and are to be denied entry into the villages." After questioning the RNA on this matter, Post learned that the Maoists issued the communique in writing two months ago. It reportedly aimed at Nepali nationals -- not Americans -- working in the hinterlands, not the Kathmandu Valley.

3. (C) On July 17, PolOff attended the World Food Program's quarterly meeting reporting on the food security situation. The WFP employs field officers in 30 heavily Maoist-affected districts in Nepal. According to WFP field reports, tensions between the Maoists and Royal Nepal Army increased greatly in June. In response, the Maoists have tightened travel restrictions in many west and mid-western districts. In the mid-western districts of Jumla, Kalikot, Humla and Mugu the Maoists have reimposed pass systems for movement; if the local Maoist leader does not approve a person's reason for travel, that person is not allowed to leave the village, reported WFP field officers. In Humla, the pass system reportedly was implemented as a response to the establishment of army medical camps in the district. In Jumla, the system was established because of clashes between the RNA and Maoists.

4. (C) In line with previous Embassy reporting, Maoist extortion activities continued to increase in all 30 of the districts in which WFP has programs. In Rasuwa and Nuwakot, two districts north of Kathmandu, for example, Maoists reportedly have doubled the amount of "donations" they demand. And in Jumla, Mugu and Rukum Districts, Maoists will not allow any new development activity to be introduced without their prior permission. In the far-western district of Bajura, local Maoists have started collecting funds from government staff as well as from school teachers.

5. (S/NF) Both WFP field officers and other NGO attendees at the briefing said that Maoists in all 30 WFP districts recently had made it known that any development program associated with the U.S. Government would not be allowed to operate in these districts. The week of June 24, a dual American and New Zealand citizen working for a WFP implementing partner, was detained by the Maoists in the mid-western district of Kalikot and questioned in detail about his citizenship. The detainee said he felt threatened by the Maoists, but was able to convince them that he was not a U.S. citizen, after which he was released. He also informed PolOff of rumors prevalent in the Maoist-affected areas that the Maoists intend to break the cease-fire not because of actions taken by the Government of Nepal, but because of U.S. and Indian "interference" in the peace negotiations.

6. (C) In a July 17 Embassy security briefing for USAID implementing partners, several U.S. - affiliated programs suggested that despite increased tension in certain areas and a high level of Maoist activity, they had encountered no

significant difficulties in continuing on-going programs in Maoist-affected areas. For example, a Johns Hopkins University-affiliated family nutrition program run by an American in Sarlahi District has been able to continue to care for newborns in areas administered solely by Maoist insurgents. All participants of the briefing were encouraged to contact program colleagues and related partners to share information on the recent Maoist notification.

17. (C) Comment. RNA reports that the Maoists intend to "prosecute" and restrict the travel of individuals associated with the United States are supported by anecdotal evidence. However, local implementation of this decision will vary considerably across the country, depending on local Maoist personalities and their relationship with ongoing development programs. Post has received no indication that the Maoists intend to target individuals directly employed by the U.S. Mission in Kathmandu. However, in coordination with Nepal security forces and other diplomatic missions, Post will continue to seek information regarding the new Maoist policy and how it might affect Mission security and development activities. End Comment.
MALINOWSKI